

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH
13 AUGUST 1979

Letters:

CIA Is No Censor

I would like to draw attention once again to the way in which the *Post-Dispatch* is misleading its readers, this time in the July 17 editorial, "Secrecy In The Courts." In it you refer to "cases in which the courts have allowed the Central Intelligence Agency to censor books and other writing dealing with the agency's misdeeds."

The Central Intelligence Agency does not "censor" to cover up its "misdeeds." The agency's prior review of its employees' manuscripts is accomplished solely to prevent the inadvertent disclosure of duly classified information, and only occasionally results in any editing at all. To suggest otherwise is to indulge in a blatant distortion of the truth.

No court has ever permitted CIA to censor its "misdeeds" from an employee's manuscript. "Misdeed" is a manipulative word of your own contrivance which you have used in this context to convey an impression that strays from the facts.

The Central Intelligence Agency is accountable today in ways that were unheard of as recently as five years ago.

Herbert E. Hetu
Director of Public Affairs
Central Intelligence Agency

Washington